

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application based on the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3 and 6-53 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 38 and 46 have been amended. Claims 4, 5 and 47 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant has amended the currently pending claims in order to expedite prosecution and does not, by this amendment, intend to abandon subject matter of the claims as originally filed or later presented, and reserves the right to pursue such subject matter in a continuing application. No new matter has been added.

Applicant is pleased to note that the Examiner indicated that claims 20-37 and 42-45 are allowed and that claims 5-7, 12, 13, 15-17, 40, 41, 51 and 52 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claims 1, 4, 8, 9, 11, 14, 38 and 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 5,991,101 to Holderer et al. ("Holderer et al."). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections for at least the following reasons.

While expressly disagreeing with and without taking any position on the rejection, claim 1 has been amended, simply to expedite prosecution, to incorporate limitations of claim 5, which was indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form.

While expressly disagreeing with and without taking any position on the rejection, claim 38 has been amended, simply to expedite prosecution, to incorporate the limitation of claim 7, which was indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Therefore, in view of Examiner's indication of the allowability of the limitations of claims 5 and 7, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1 and 38 are believed to be allowable. Claim 4 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer and thus its rejection is now moot. Claims 8, 9, 11 and 14 depend from claim 1 and are, therefore, patentable for at least the same reasons provided above related to claim 1, and for the additional features recited therein. Claim 39 depends from claim 38 and is, therefore, patentable for at least the same reasons provided above related to claim 38, and for the additional features recited therein. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 1, 4, 8, 9, 11, 14, 38 and 39 under §102(b) over Holderer et al. should be withdrawn and the claims be allowed.

Claims 2, 3, 18, 19, 46-50 and 53 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of Holderer et al. Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections for at least the following reasons.

As discussed above, Applicant believes claim 1 is allowable. Further, while expressly disagreeing with and without taking any position on the rejection, claim 46 has been amended, simply to expedite prosecution, to incorporate limitations similar those of claim 5, a claim that was indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Therefore, in view of Examiner's indication of the allowability of the limitations of claim 5, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1 and 46 are believed to be allowable. Claims 2, 3, 18 and 19 depend from claim 1 and are, therefore, patentable for at least the same reasons provided above related to claim 1, and for the additional features recited therein. Claim 47 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer and thus its rejection is now moot. Claims 48-50 and 53 depend from claim 46 and are, therefore, patentable for at least the same reasons provided above related to claim 46, and for the additional features recited therein. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 2, 3, 18, 19, 46-50 and 53 under §103(a) over Holderer et al. should be withdrawn and the claims be allowed.

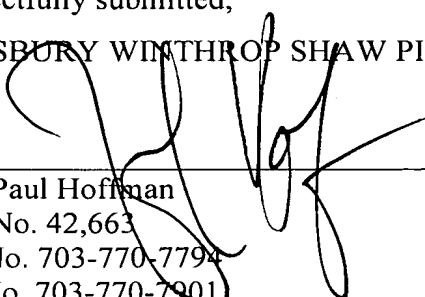
All rejections and objections have been addressed. It is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and a notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number 033975. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Should there be any questions or concerns regarding this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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